

## REMARKS

This application has been carefully reviewed in light of the Office Action of May 3, 2006. Claims 17, 19-26, and 32 and 36-39 are now presented for examination. Claim 39 has been added to assure Applicants of a full measure of protection of the scope to which they deem themselves entitled. Claims 17, 26, 32, 36, 37, and 38 have been amended to even further clarify the claimed subject matter. Claims 27, 28, and 33-35 have been canceled without prejudice or disclaimer of subject matter. Claims 17, 25, 26, 36 and 37 are independent. Favorable reconsideration is respectfully requested.

In the outstanding Office Action, Claims 17, 19-28 and 32-38 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being obvious from U.S. Patent 5,913,019 (Attenberg) in view of U.S. Patent 5,487,010 (Drake et al.) and U.S. Patent 6,369,908 (Frey et al.).

Cancellation of Claims 27, 28, and 33-35 renders their rejections moot, although Applicants do not concede the propriety of their rejection.

Independent Claim 17, as amended, recites a sticker printing apparatus for printing a desired sticker by operating a touch panel overlaid on a display screen. The apparatus comprises storage means for storing a plurality of images, which are to be parts for forming a sticker, as a plurality of logical layers which overlie each other in a fixed order, and a selection means for selecting one of a plurality of background patterns displayed on the display screen by using the touch panel. A background image display means displays on the display screen a background image corresponding to the background pattern selected by the selection means and stores the background image as a bitmap image data in a layer corresponding to a background image layer among the plurality of logical layers in the storage means. An input means inputs, by using the touch panel, a plurality of character strings to be printed on a sticker, each of the plurality of character strings being

assigned to each of the plurality of logical layers. A control means generates a set of bitmap image data corresponding to an inputted character string and stores the bitmap image data in a layer assigned to the inputted character string among the plurality of logical layers of the storage means, each time a character string is inputted by the input means. A generating means generates image data of a sticker by laying out each of the sets of bitmap image data stored in the storage means in accordance with the fixed order and predetermined positions assigned to each of the logical layers. An edit means is used for, when a desired layer to be edited is designated by using the touch panel with regard to image data obtained by the generating means, editing the designated layer, and re-generating image data of the sticker by overlaying bitmap image data of the edited layer and bitmap image data of non-edited layers in accordance with the fixed order and the positions assigned to each of the logical layers. An output means is used for, when an output instruction is inputted by using the touch panel, outputting the image data of the sticker, obtained by the generating means or the edit means, to printing means.

By virtue of the foregoing features of Claim 17, a user can easily obtain a sticker or an image in a predetermined form by merely selecting a background image and inputting character strings which are to be parts for forming the sticker or image to be printed without setting the layout of each of background image and character strings. This is because the order of overlapping of each of the logical layers and the positions of images to be overlapped is fixed.

As pointed out in the Amendment filed September 19, 2005, *Attenberg* relates to an interactive photo kiosk that permits a user to make a photograph of the user against a computer-generated background, a number of which are available for selection by the user. Once the user has selected the desired background, the resulting image stored in

digital form is used to produce an image containing multiple instances of the desired image, and this multiple image can be printed out with each repetition of the selected image made to be peeled off from the backing sheet of the print (see Fig. 2A, S94 and S95).

Even if *Attenberg* be deemed to disclose selecting a background image and a foreground image (see Fig. 2A, S94 and S95), and overlaying the images, nothing has been found, or pointed out, in *Attenberg* that would teach or suggest generating a set of bitmap image data corresponding to an inputted character string and storing the bitmap image data in a layer assigned to the inputted character string among a plurality of logical layers of a storage means, and generating image data of a sticker by laying out each of the sets of bitmap image data stored in the storage means in accordance with the fixed order and predetermined positions assigned to each of the logical layers, as set forth in Claim 17. For at least this reason, Claim 17 is believed to be clearly allowable over *Attenberg*, taken alone.

Independent Claim 37 recites a printing apparatus for printing an image on a desired sheet, comprising input means for entering a character and an image which are parts for forming an output image, and storing control means for storing, in a predetermined storage, the character and the image, as each one of a plurality of logical layers, inputted by the input means. The apparatus also comprises edit means for, when a desired layer to be edited is designated, editing the designated layer, and layout means for laying out each of the stored character and image read from each of plurality of logical layers in accordance with a fixed order. The layout means comprises rotation means for rotating an image of a layer.

The teachings of *Attenberg* were referred to above.

It is respectfully submitted nothing has been found, or pointed out, in *Attenberg*, that would teach or suggest the foregoing features of Claim 37.

Moreover, even if *Drake* and *Frey et al.* are deemed to show all that they are cited for, the result of the proposed combination of those two patents with *Attenberg* (even assuming that combination would be a permissible one), would not meet the terms of each of Claims 17 and 37.

Accordingly Claims 17 and 37 are each deemed to be clearly patentable over *Attenberg*, *Drake*, and *Frey et al.*, whether considered separately or in combination.

Each of the other independent claims recites features that are similar in many relevant respects to those of Claim 17 discussed above, and each such independent claims is accordingly deemed allowable for at least the reasons presented above.

A review of the other art of record has failed to reveal anything which, in Applicants' opinion, would remedy the deficiencies of the art discussed above, as references against the independent claims herein. Those claims are therefore believed patentable over the art of record.

The other claims in this application are each dependent from one or another of the independent claims discussed above and are therefore believed patentable for the same reasons. Since each dependent claim is also deemed to define an additional aspect of the invention, however, the individual consideration or reconsideration, as the case may be, of the patentability of each on its own merits is respectfully requested.

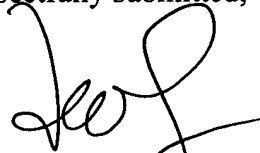
This Amendment After Final Action is believed clearly to place this application in condition for allowance, and its entry is therefore believed proper under 37 C.F.R. § 1.116. In any event, entry of this Amendment After Final Action, as an earnest effort to advance prosecution and reduce the number of issues, is respectfully requested.

Should the Examiner believe that issues remain outstanding, he is respectfully requested to contact Applicants' undersigned attorney in an effort to resolve such issues and advance the case to issue.

In view of the foregoing amendments and remarks, Applicants respectfully request favorable reconsideration and allowance of the present application.

Applicants' undersigned attorney may be reached in our New York Office by telephone at (212) 218-2100. All correspondence should continue to be directed to our address listed below.

Respectfully submitted,



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